

## Environmental News



For Immediate Release: July 15, 2004  
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### **U.S. EPA Awards San Diego \$355,000 towards Cleaner School Buses**

**SAN FRANCISCO** - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently awarded the San Diego Air Pollution Control District a \$355,000 for retrofitting school buses with clean diesel technology.

The San Diego Air Pollution Control District will use the funds to establish a sub-grant program for school districts throughout San Diego County to retrofit diesel school buses with particulate matter filters. The county includes many areas where environmental justice is a concern.

"The EPA is working to eliminate the health impacts to children from diesel pollution," said Wayne Nastri, the EPA's administrator for the Pacific Southwest region. "I recognize the more we do to eliminate diesel pollution impacting our children the better they will be able to learn and grow into healthy adults."

San Diego has 35 public school districts operating 1,651 buses, including 21 pre-1977 model year buses, and 85 1978-1986 model year buses. The City of San Diego School district has the largest fleet, operating 505 buses traveling an average of 21,644 miles a year.

As a result of the grant, 206 diesel powered school buses will be retrofitted with regenerative particulate trap mufflers to operate on ultra low sulphur diesel fuel. Approximately 12.2 pounds of particulate matter per bus retrofit can be removed from the air each year.

"The San Diego County Air Pollution Control District is very pleased to receive this grant from the U.S. EPA's Clean School Bus USA Program," said Richard Smith, director of the San Diego APCD. "These funds will be used to reduce soot particle emissions from up to 78 diesel school buses by 85%. This will help protect school children from exposure to those toxic emissions and improve San Diego County's air quality."

The goal of Clean School Bus USA is to reduce both children's exposure to diesel exhaust and the amount of air pollution created by diesel school buses.

School buses are the safest way for children to get to school. However, pollution from diesel vehicles has health implications for everyone, especially children. Clean School Bus USA brings together partners from business, education, transportation, and public health organizations to work toward these goals:

- Encouraging policies and practices to eliminate unnecessary public school bus idling.
- School buses retrofits that will remain in the fleet with better emission control technologies and/or fueling them with cleaner fuels.
- Replacing the oldest buses in the fleet with new, less polluting buses.

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